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AUGUST WEATHER AND CROPS

A radio talk by J. B. Kincer, Weather Bureau, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period, National Farm and Home Hour, Wednesday, September 6, 1933.

The Meteorological summer ends with August, but we frequently, of course, have some real summer weather in September. August, this year, had, in general, nearer normal conditions than either June or July, for both of these months had decidedly abnormal weather over much of the country. June was generally hot and decidedly dry. July was warm in the Western States and also dryer than normal in most sections, except the South.

For August, the average temperature was near normal in nearly all sections of the country, but the distribution of rainfall was very irregular. The summer as a whole, comprising the months of June, July, and August, had about normal warmth in the Atlantic States, and most of the cotton belt, but it was decidedly warmer than normal in nearly all other sections, especially in the Northwest, centering in North Dakota and Montana. Many areas that had been dry during the preceeding two months had more than normal rainfall in August. These include the Middle Atlantic area, where heavy rains fell during the passing of a tropical storm the latter part of the month, the Great Plains States from Texas to South Dakota, and also Wyoming and Montana. Montana and Wyoming had unusually heavy rainfall.

On the other hand, the northern Ohio Valley, including the States of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois; also Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and North Dakota continued unfavorably dry, and growing crops suffered severely.

In general, the weather during the summer of 1933 was decidedly adverse for most crops. Unfavorable winter conditions, followed by heat and drought in the spring months, played havoc with the winter wheat crop and the late spring and early summer were entirely too hot and dry for spring grains, especially spring wheat, and oats. Corn suffered severely from heat and drought in many places, especially in the Ohio Valley, and the Southwest centering in Oklahoma. In Kansas also corn was badly damaged and even in Iowa, where the state as a whole has a fair crop, some persistantly dry areas are very poor.

The corn crop has matured rapidly with a considerable percentage now safe from frost, but at the same time some backward areas in the Ohio Valley will require later than normal frosts for maturity. Late corn shows improvement in the eastern Ohio Valley, in Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri, and the northern Great Plains. In most other places the rains came too late to be of material help. In Iowa progress has been generally fair, but conditon varies from very poor to excellent; in this, the premier corn state, one fifth of the crop became safe from frost by September 1, which is a greater percentage than normally is safe at that date.

During the past week temperatures have averaged near normal in the Cotton Belt, but there were frequent showers and much cloudy weather over large areas, making rather unfavorable cotton weather. However, the summer in general has been favorable for the cotton crop, it being one of the very few

crops favored.

It has been a poor summer for pastures and feed crops; grazing lands were seared in many interior parts of the country, especially in the Ohio Valley, the Great Plains, and Central-Northern States, with considerable stock feeding necessary, even in mid-summer. However, pastures have responded, rapidly to improved moisture conditions over large areas.

Recent rains have been helpful in many places. In most States east of the Rocky Mountains the soil has been either moderately well, or abundantly supplied with moisture; some sections have had too much rain, causing delay to field work. In the Atlantic area, late reports from last week's storm confirm earlier indications of heavy losses to growing crops, but at the same time some improvement is noted. Since the rains the condition of late crops and that of the soil shows decided improvement in many interior localities, especially in the upper Ohio Valley, and the Plains area from northern Texas northward to southern South Dakota, as well as the States of Montana and Wyoming. Improvement is especially marked in Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, and Montana, where the soil is now well conditioned for plowing and seeding of winter wheat; pastures have revived, and late crops improved.

Rain is still needed in Michigan, much of Indiana and Illinois, parts of Iowa, and more generally in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and North Dakota.

During the last few days a very unusual thing has occurred in the way of weather. Two tropical storms, each attended by general gales and winds of hurricane force over more restricted areas, reached, nearly at this same time, the extreme southern portion of the country -- one going inland over south-central Florida and the other over the extreme lower Rio Grande Valley, slightly North of Brownsville, Texas. The Florida storm has caused very heavy rains in the South Atlantic States during the past 24 hours; this morning Charleston, S. Car., reports more than 10 inches and Savannah, Ga., 6 and a half inches of rain. It is probably unprecedented for two storms of this character to reach the mainland of the United States at approximately the same time. As you probable know, these storms originate over tropical waters 5° to 10° North of the equator. They are leisurly moving, mighty whirl winds with a destructive core 100 miles or more in diameter. The whole system saunters along at a pace of 10 to 15 miles an hour, but with the whirling velocity often reaching 100 miles an hour or more, with heavy driving rain and squalls. Those of you who have never personally experienced one of these meteorological terrors, when well developed, can have no conception of just what they mean.